Book reviews

Programmes to Promote Breastfeeding. Edited by D B Jelliffe and E F Patrice Jelliffe. Pp 490: £30 paperback. Oxford University Press, 1988. ISBN 0-19-261457-6.

Is the pendulum swinging back towards professional backing for breast feeding? I write this in the week before the vaccine for measles, mumps, and rubella erupts and have the feeling that paediatricians are fully behind this campaign. Our enthusiasm for breast feeding seems to have been less thunderous and perhaps this is one reason why fewer mothers are breast feeding.¹ The Jelliffes' latest book, together with the forthcoming national campaign in the United Kingdom, may spur us to better things.

The editors have gathered a galaxy of 85 international experts on breast feeding and therefore there is a degree of overkill. The book looks at small scale and national programmes, the role of support groups, international agencies and professional associations (Canada, the United States, and Scandinavia are the stars—poor marks for the United Kingdom), at the role of the health service and the market, and at training and 'policy issues' (including the state of the WHO Code in each country). It is almost inevitable that when so many authors are writing on a subject close to their heart that there will be much rhetoric and repetition. Had the essence of the successful programmes been distilled into 100 pages I believe we would have a best seller. A major defect is the lack of differentiation between campaigns in developed and developing countries. Though we can learn from the latter, the dangers of bottle feeding are far less in industrialised countries hence the thrust of the argument must be more on allowing informed choice than on the public's health. What then are the keys to successful promotion? I can only pick out a few, noting with interest that measures targetted at health care workers, hospital practices, and the legislative field worked better than programmes aimed at teaching mothers.

In the Phillipines, Dr Clavano revolutionised hospital practice and reduced infections by phasing out milk formula and bottle feeding completely in postnatal wards. In Finland, babies were put to the

breast after birth and supplementary feeding was abandoned: in 1983, over 90% of babies breast fed for over three months. Canadian paediatricians organised a national information service for physicians and hospital staff. Photographs of staff breast feeding their babies were posted in an antenatal clinic in Mexico. The best example of successful legislation to control bottle feeding is Papua New Guinea, which put feeding bottles on prescription only in 1977, with dramatic reduction in malnutrition and gastroenteritis.

Can we learn from this book? It should certainly be to hand in all maternity and neonatal units. More important perhaps is to use it as an incentive for the BPA's soon to come breast feeding campaign?

Reference

- ¹ DHSS. *Present day practice in infant feeding*. 3rd Report. London: HMSO, 1988.

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Clinical Nutrition in Paediatric Disorders. By D Bentley and M Lawson. Pp 332: £42.50 hardback. Baillière Tindall, 1988. ISBN 0-7020-1245-9.

'Including digestion without tears for jobbing paediatricians' might have been a suitable subtitle, as it describes the authors' intentions. A collaboration between a paediatrician and dietician, the result is an interesting hybrid. The first 197 pages are devoted to pathophysiology, clinical aspects, and management. The appendices run to 107 pages, possibly meriting an entry in the *Guinness Book of Records* for a work of this length. Clearly the aim is to present the relevant dietetic data without rendering the main text indigestible. In this it succeeds admirably.

The first clinical section deals with normal nutritional needs, dehydration, parenteral and enteral nutrition, and malnutrition. It also contains sections on nutrition in cancer, burns, and trauma. The second section is a conventional ramble through gastrointestinal and hepatic

disorders, and the third deals with non-enteric disorders requiring modified diets for cardiac and renal disease, diabetes mellitus, obesity, and anorexia.

Each topic is introduced by a mini review of current trends, suitably laced with up to date references. A description of the pathophysiology, a list of major features and investigations precede diagnosis and treatment. One criticism: research and esoteric investigations, although of interest to the paediatrician, are lumped together with the more established and proved tests, without at times giving clues as to relative usefulness, reliability, or practicality.

The text is replete with tables, figures, and diagrams that seek to break down the barriers to understanding the intricacies of digestion.

The appendices are to be used as companions to the text, and marshal together a great deal of information from national and international recommended dietary intakes and manufacturers' data. More worked examples would have helped my understanding. Overall, worth a read as a more practical approach than the standard text, with a user friendly, not entirely 'cook-book', approach. I am sure it will find a place in many paediatric departments.

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Pathogenesis and Immunity in Pertussis. Edited by A C Wardlaw and R Parton. Pp 482: £55 hardback. John Wiley, 1988.

This must be the most definitive work on this subject available at the present time. It is not a book for the shelves of most general paediatricians but more a reference book that is likely to be seen on the shelves of microbiologists.

This book brings the combined knowledge of 31 authors, from six countries, together in 21 chapters. It is written predominantly by microbiologists, and covers all aspects of the organism and the disease. The early chapters cover the growth and virulence and the mechanism of action of each of the toxins. Further chapters consider the clinical aspects of pertussis,